

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 22-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Claims 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20 and 21 have been previously withdrawn from consideration. Reconsideration based on the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant gratefully appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by the Examiner during the personal interview. The points discussed are incorporated into the following remarks.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7, 10, 16, 19 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Buck et al. (European Patent No. 0057253 A2); claims 1-7, 10, 16, 19 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kunio (Japanese Patent Application No. 4-162440) in view of Buck; claims 1-7, 10, 16, 19 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hirotaka (Japanese Patent Application No. 5-121486) in view of Buck; claims 1-7, 10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hutchison et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,132,856) in view of Buck; claims 16, 19 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hutchison in view of Buck; and claims 16, 19 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Buck. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

None of the applied references disclose or suggest low-bending-resistance portions which are formed asymmetrically in regions, that exclude and sandwich a central portion of the second region in the widthwise direction of the base substrate, on either side with respect to the central portion, as recited in claim 1.

As shown in Fig. 9 of the present application, for example, low-bending-resistance portions 88, 86 which are formed asymmetrically on either side with respect to the central portion in a widthwise direction of the base substrate 80.

In contrast, Buck, for example, discloses low-bending-resistance portions that are symmetrical on either side with respect to the central portion in a widthwise direction of the base substrate. Further, Hutchison discloses areas 58 including a central portion in the widthwise direction of the base substrate. Similarly, Hirotaka discloses a portion 20a that includes a central portion of the second region in a widthwise direction of the base substrate. Finally, Kunio does not disclose low-bending-resistance portions formed asymmetrically on either side with respect to a central portion.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-12 and 22-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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